[Transcript] Discussion of *Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia '75*

Moderator: In this final discussion, Sanento Yuliman of ITB (Bandung Institute of Technology) will share his thoughts, and Sudarmaji, here, will also express his opinions, and then from the audience I invite Zaini, Nashar, and Billy Kusumo from Surabaya to express their opinions as well, and finally at that point will we enter the final discussion. I now open the floor to you, Sanento Yuliman.

Sanento Yuliman: The comments that I wanted to make in response to this exhibition I have written in the catalog, so those are my comments, and I'm not going to read them again at length. There are several points that are important and noted in the introduction. First, what I'm trying to do in the introduction is to trace a trend in this exhibit that deviates from the tendencies that are present in the arts that developed within Indonesian during this century; I'm trying to express what is, in my opinion, a trend and, of course, a trend that is not uniform for all artists or even in across all of the works of the artists participating in this exhibit. Nevertheless, I feel as though the trend I note in the introduction can be seen clearly in this exhibit. So really, if we try to trace the development of our art, we see there have been changes within it. For example, one important change was when PERSAGI in 1937 announced its presence and then developed a new style of art, or painting. What is actually involved in this change? One important point in this change, of course, is a shift in sensibility; with the paintings of the Dutch East Indies era, the painter primarily directed sensibility to the beauty of nature as well as the beauty of women. Sudjojono and his peers have a new sensitivity, a sensitivity to all that is around them and also sensitivity to the new aspects within painting. Another change we can observe in Indonesian art occurred roughly around the year 1960, where at the time we see a trend in the direction of greater abstraction in painting and sculpture. We see for example the works of Oesman Effendi, the work of Sriyadi, Sadali, in Jogjakarta there was Handrio and Sidhartha. Then the following years we see in our arts the emergence or growth of abstract art. The following change that I have noticed is like what is seen in the trend found in this exhibition, I think I will not repeat what I have written, so it there for you to read. It is only clear when we read this introduction, within which there are still things that are not unequivocally true that I mentioned—perhaps only suggestive or hypothetical. Obviously, because what we see today is a new thing and I am not a fortune teller, we have not seen the possibilities that could arise out of the art that we see here now. But, in this discussion we can actually see it, what can happen from the trends shown in this exhibition. Maybe it is just that which I mentioned, and perhaps later in the discussion we can further discuss this.

Moderator: I invite you to speak, Sudarmadji, though I want to explain that the rest of the panelists that I mentioned earlier will have approximately 6 to 7 minutes to express their opinions.

Sudarmadji: Thank you. To the respected audience, this evening I get a turn to simply express my opinions on what can be comprehended within this exhibition space. Perhaps, to be able to express, describe, or explain my feelings or appreciation this afternoon, there should not be any confusion also if, for example, I compare it to my appreciation of previous exhibitions. Friends, when I entered the exhibition room, it was quite clear—or I became conscious—that it was like I was being

thrown into a situation, or a room, where each work, where each perceivable quality of the art, where the colors, where the fine shapes that were directly produced by the artist in relation with elements including the pillars, or ceiling, or grass, or anything that is in the room, visible or felt, or I comprehend that one with another appears to mutually support or interconnect, so that this is an event that in my opinion differs from others, as when I entered an exhibition, whether it was the exhibition of the previous Biennale, whether by Fajar Sidiq, or by Nashar, or Affandi, and such. Thus, an event or an enactment as such is in my opinion quite different from what I have noticed, or has occurred in previous exhibitions. Why? Or, approximately, whether the cause has become the case, such as it is when we analyse. Apparently, in the tendencies of this contemporary art, we note that in addition to many works that are still enclosed or installed in frames, many other works are unfolded or scattered casually with all kinds of manifested forms. Perhaps this is quite a different reason from our comprehension when we look at previous exhibitions, yes, of course this is not an enormous leap—a very extreme leap—so that it seems that in the time preceding this exhibition there was nothing, signs or tendencies that would seem to be able to connect to this current direction. Altogether with art I think also no, because art events everywhere, all over the world, and including in Indonesia, in addition to creators creating something said to be new, but actually somehow also consciously or unconsciously they here are sustaining, maybe also drawing values or benefits from the heritage of the previous arts. In the single area of colours for example, there can be found many instances that maybe previously were less—or not even—acknowledged by us, especially in regards to material use, from the earlier one, for example, Sudjojono's work which very likely deifies the pencil, or maybe another work which relates to paint, or to canvas, or etc. Suddenly, like a poet might say, there are among today's creators some units or objects that are taken for granted. Like a poet, perhaps it could be allowed and perhaps it is true, too, my interpretation of these poets, as if they were also taking the words that already exist in the dictionary, for example there is the word "rice", there is "morning", there is "red" and so on. So let's say there is a unit or understanding that is already apparently available. To the previous artistic tendencies, they are still very rare or almost also do not exist here in Indonesia, like that done by Muniardhi, for example, with alacrity, taking a piece of doll, throwing its head, glued there. So it is as though, or in my opinion, is almost the same as a poet who uses the word, for example, of for the sound of a frog jumping, "*plung*", "*plung*" is already in the dictionary, for example, "frog" is in it as well, and so on, and all that remains is the arrangement into a particular form. But also this arrangement becomes very organic with its art, not simply being randomly attached with glue, perhaps along with the tendencies of the new literature, which is maybe a bit Dadaist or another style with which I am less familiar. But apparently in that field of art now, this kind of thing is occurring. Take for example a door, installed here, in a different situation, in a different condition, with a different intention and something happened perhaps that was astonishing audiences at first, but afterwards it perhaps became something normal and so on. Indeed, in the words of everyday life, or in this audience, I have heard some art commentators in Jakarta, those who saw a carelessness in his artistic process, so if looking just at the manifestation or the mastery of the physical components of the art it could be regarded as a work that is thoughtless, not based on diligence, maybe not based on the laws of harmony, the laws of unity, these laws that of course in my opinion are based on criteria that have passed. This guy for example could easily be gesturing at either Hardi, or Jim Supangkat, or some others who say that this is nice and easy to just take a few wrecks of steel, take some boxes of

soap, or maybe take some ropes that are not used and so on. Grasping such an idea does not require a persevering study, as he demonstrates in his example someone who says he wants to draw or paint something realistic with a mastery of form, darkness, coloring and so forth requires so much time from year to year. But this is something else. At the time that I read the latest writings of Sanento, if I am not mistaken he said that perhaps the understanding of art—its interpretations and contentions—is not monopolised by one generation. So certainly each and every generation in accordance with its developments, in accordance with its milieu, in accordance to the existing challenges, it has rights. Not only does it have rights, but actually, maybe by nature it will give a response that will inevitably be different because it is the challenge that is different, where Sudjojono is probably still fussing about nationalism, another maybe with populism, while others with the socio-political responses, or the one which perhaps is based on intense—or maybe mild—individuality. So it turns out that when I consider once again, right now for example, the images, I can even imagine, are not something that is ugly and probably not something that is impossible when in the tendencies of the art in front of us, maybe a few people are dancing among them so that the atmosphere comes alive and it is possible that the atmosphere merges fine art perhaps with poetry, perhaps with dance, perhaps with music and perhaps those dancing are our colleagues and all of us. So if these young painters themselves give it a name, “I exhibit new art in Indonesia”, in my opinion this is not something that is superfluous. Although once again, what they did is still not a very far leap because, after all, previously there were already existing signs, like climbing stairs that were already there. I guess these are my impressions, thank you.

Moderator: I invite you Zaini. If your voice is loud enough, you can contribute from there, but if it feels weak, you can come up here.

Zaini: Respected audience, after I saw this exhibition—and I have seen it a few times—what was raised by the previous speaker, the comments are also quite interesting for me. Although some of the works on display are a bit weak, or weak in practice—because I consider that works of this kind must also be accompanied by a technique or implementation that is quite strong. But, besides that, I want to try to look back, in particular regards to the development of our art starting from PERSAGI until now. If I am not mistaken, Sudjojono, as spokesman for PERSAGI, said, around the 1930s, “let us learn in the West, let us abandon the old art, the art of the Mataram, the art of the Majapahit, the art of the Sriwijaya”, because for him such art smelled of incense. But a few years after that he also expressed, “let us try to establish the Indonesian arts, so that in that art there are senses of Indonesia”, that is what Sudjojono, with his PERSAGI, said. After that in the 1940s, Gelanggang also said that we are the heirs of Western culture, but after that, some time later, around the 1970s, when I met with Mas Sudjatmoko in America I asked him "Mas Koko, how should our art be today?” He said, "we should start from where we stand, because if we are also involved in this or heavily influenced by the art that exists now, we will be destroyed, we must guard against being colonised through art from major countries affecting us.” Then I remembered again ITB (Bandung Institute of Technology), the development from ITB. During the establishment of the arts movement at ITB that was led by Ries Mulder, many of the artists then tended to paint like Ries Mulder or at least a bit like ... (artist name). But we see the works of Srihadi, Pirous, that was what they left behind entirely, so different from where he first started, but eventually he tried to find something. So I

am still asking myself about this, and I am looking backward as I did in my comments earlier. Will this development, as expressed by my colleagues, meet the same fate? Because of course, the first steps, and the steps towards a foundation that is considered by you to be good for continuing your art. But more importantly is, of course, the test for you, yourself, because this art is certainly not for just a month or two, and not even for years, so in addition to this I also hope you will also be loyal to your profession. That is all and thank you.

Moderator: Nashar brother, don't be shy.

Nashar: Friends, what has been raised by our colleagues has actually been quite clear in addressing what is on display in this exhibition, and Zaini and Darmadji covered the background of the paintings on display dating back to PERSAGI. So I guess I want to try a little bit as well, not about the history of Indonesian painting, but I will try to discuss what has been done by our fellow painters who are exhibiting this evening. Actually for me it is difficult to determine where to start, as like Darmadji said earlier, once we get into the exhibition space, because we are used to seeing paintings which are shaped—which are framed—where in this different exhibition space it feels completely… we feel an expansiveness, ourselves, facing these works. From this expansiveness alone, of course we do not stop asking why, what, who caused such things. But what is clear, of course, from the unusual forms of the works of our colleagues earlier today, forms we had not seen before or are not typical for artists in Indonesia. Even though we—or anyone who sees reproductions of art in books—would not feel strange, it is just that most of the painters who rarely see those works directly will still feel something strange. If based on that, then look at the exhibit poster out front which states that this is an exhibition of art—not painting—and that is one problem. Perhaps we also need to consider whether each type of our colleagues' work will be classified as what has already been done in the past, whether a painting, a sculpture, or something else. Or perhaps also for our colleagues earlier today, it is not important, in regard to form. I think this thing has some good to it, that this form is explained a little by the artists. Then there are other things that I see, such as the elements of applied art. In the criteria for form today, indeed there are elements of applied art, so up to now, how far has the influence of applied art spread? What I mean is this, if we just take the works of Kathe Kollwitz for example, the elements of illustration are present throughout her works. But in my opinion she is a strong artist as a painter, and that those earlier elements were merely elements—of course, she does not simply create an illustration. I take this example to make it easier for me to say exactly how far the works of our colleagues are influenced by applied art. But also perhaps we have this problem, or call it my own, this is crucial, in such a case, but also for our colleagues who exhibit this evening, it is not important what exactly applied art is, what is sindropus, what is a painting, what is a statue. Perhaps this also needs to be explained by the artists, or perhaps you could explain, Sanento. So today what I want to talk about is just, I guess it is more questions for the artists of this exhibition, about what I mentioned earlier. I think that is all.

Moderator: Gatot Kusumo, this discussion is not only open to painters but also to film directors like you.

Gatot Kusumo: Friends, I was raised with the Kancil fables, like the *Kancil steals the cucumber*, for example, but some of you were raised with television and comics, and some others with Hawaii Five-O and and the like. So there is a different atmosphere, and because of that I am speaking about all of these combinations. Yes I have also now heard the condom song, various kinds are uniting now, so I'm not going analyse variations. At the time I entered the exhibition earlier today and heard the music, I said that the music was slapdash but interesting. The exhibition is also shoddy, but interesting. So this shoddiness that emerged from previous tranquility, yeah, perhaps the tranquility of the song *asomorodono* and others like it from before. Pop art has encountered junk noise now; there are those who are not happy as well—not unhappy in the sense of irritation… sometimes the heart isn't too peaceful, you know? "What *is* this?" Also if you listen to music, we cannot be objective, does the music make us happy or not. There is music now that makes me happy, and if I am happy I join in dancing to it, shaking my hips, but also if I am not happy, "if I am locked up with this music for about half of the night in a single room, it's like having exzema". Now looking at this exhibition, I have not tried confining myself with these paintings or this art—would I be itchy and irritated or not? But what is obvious is the shoddiness. How could it not be, with eleven people, eleven expressions, being told to judge with, let's say, an emotional response. Yes, say, pretend to use a foreign language, okay? I am frankly puzzled, judging two people or only one person, I'm confused, let alone eleven people at once. So I am looking at this like a night market, messy, there is joy, and sometimes we look at this, like, "what *is* this?" Sometimes I see like the people who are still judging *Kancil steals the cucumber*, but sometimes also like the pop music I already mentioned that makes me shake my hips. Because these eleven people are grouped as one, it is quite difficult. Therefore, I also see this as a whole, and I do not split it apart. And if I may pretend to be a little objective, the case was said earlier "This is not new. Maybe it is new in Indonesia, but more generally it is not, as so many have done it before". But that isn't the problem, rather I think the problem is generally with each of the individuals who painted these, this becomes a part of the teenagers' in general search for selfhood. And at some point each of us rebels, starting from "no smoking" to pretending to smoke in front of parents, to "let's go", so there is the challenge. This exhibit also has this problem, the case that is challenged answers, or not, I don't know, and those who feel challenged or are challenging, I also do not know. But there is this challenging and sometimes there is arrogance, the arrogance as if it is the "most current", this contemporary Indonesian art panacea, extra contemporary. But it may as well be. Indeed, young people have to be that way, I say as someone who grew up with the story *Kancil steals the cucumber*. Young people may be like that, but—with a *but—a*rrogant beginnings may not go on forever, this is the matter. So friends, if I say look for selfhood then I guess these 11 people are included, what is it, a peripheral painter or artist. The periphery—how pleasurable to explain, if I later explain what is called "intellectual". There is always the *peripheral man*, one who is at the periphery, who always develop vocabulary or culture or ideas. And I think this, for Indonesia these 11 people are *the peripheral artists*. I've talked about the case of results with some people, and those with results are those that are recorded, with that one Van Gogh perhaps are thousands who did not only die. Crazy, Van Gogh himself was crazy. So peripheral individuals can be crazy, but if they are not crazy sometimes, they cannot be artists as well. There was madness, you see, and artists are also a little crazy, and sometimes a lot. So this, here, may as well enter the category crazy, but a craziness that people are looking for. Thus, if I had to judge, there is no value. I just say shoddy—some

are happy and some are not. Happiness is according to my measurement, yeah, it could be said that our sentiments are not other people's affairs. Thus, I view this as a phenomenon that has not been successful, but, anyway, if the results are messy, and hopefully this is a development in painting that is stirring us from this "*Nina Bobok*" (Indonesian lullaby), and making things a bit lively. So that yes, like pop music, because that pop music also resulted in The Beatles, whose compositions were good—how to play the guitar so that the results are nice, it is a kind of technique. But at the beginning I think the technique is not necessary, but if it is developed over a long time, technique is needed as well. Yeah, it can't not be. Playing the piano, it cannot be inconsequential—does clammering on the piano make music, yes or no? To play the guitar, The Beatles also studied. I think that the meaning in all of this, I often say, is that modern art is not careless or unintentional. Although it is impulse—earlier I read a bit in the catalog about "impulse". This word "impulse" is quite difficult actually, and what exactly is the source of impulse? Sometimes the feeling of an impulse comes from the navel… or above heart, says the next intellectual, and the location still isn't clear. Therefore, friends, if it is said that the artists are committed to the profession and such, I would like to see in five years how they have developed. How far along in stability and maturity, which until now is still in a hectic, sloppy, inquisitive state. I think that is enough, thank you.

Moderator: Friends, before I give an opportunity to the other attendees, I would like to try to summarise some of the main ideas from the five previous speakers. It is certain that this exhibition has provoked a kind of shock, and shock can cause some reactions: a happy reaction or an unhappy reaction. The opinion "take it or leave it", as had been expressed by Gatot Kusumo. The previous speakers also expressed that there is something new, but maybe not entirely new because we can find developments of this kind also in other cultures. So they are asking where exactly we are. I think that here we have a problem thats concerns the general problems of our culture, meaning the form of society, the form of culture and forms of expression of what exactly we want or are suitable for us today. The statements that can be seen in this exhibition space, according to Sudarmadji, are closely related to the environment—that was noted by Sudarmadji and also, I think, Sanento. Connecting with the environment, as if these works are quite aggressive, out of the frame, abandoning the frame. Then go into the room where we are now. So it is like this: the problem of reality raises questions for Nashar, whether these statements have anything to do with applied art or fine art. But I think for our subsequent discussion we should avoid debating terms, I think we should focus our discussion on the ideas that we can extract from the comments of the five speakers. First, is there really a new aesthetic, and if so, how is it new? Is there a reason that these works were created in Indonesia, and if there is not a reason, why, and if there is a reason, why? Is there any relation to the environment, and what kind of environment, a purely physical environment or a spiritual environment as well? I think we should discuss these three questions for a while, and I invite all of you to participate in the conversation.

Recording stops. 46:17

Since we are already impatient to discuss, who would like to start?

Name Unknown 1: Earlier, what exactly was concluded?

Recording stops. 46: 55-47: 09

M Sulebar: What will be the conclusion of, or the points that were summarized by Feransi earlier? Because I am more likely to look at art or to judge art in terms of appreciation and not in terms of ideas. Perhaps Pak Gatot is smarter than me for the analysis of the art. So in this case I would like to say that… oh, yeah, I want to return again to the earlier point, that indeed this is not new. What was expressed by our colleagues here, I think indeed it has already happened and that if we look at the world outside of Indonesia, it is definitely not new. Indeed it is new in Indonesia, so I agree with the earlier speaker who said that the artists, as young people, should be proud because in this case they are braver than their senior colleagues to tear down—to create new work here in Indonesia. But when it comes to the issue of how to proceed, and how it relates to Indonesia, I think I prefer that this form is allowed to develop first, allowed to live first. Whether it'll be able to continue to live in Indonesia, and whether these young artists who exhibit now feel like this has something to do with the Indonesian environment, I think that is still a question. Perhaps you yourselves are still asking this? I think so, Feransi. I am more inclined to let this form evolve first, and not be judged.

Moderator: I see this discussion is starting to be too stiff. But before I give a chance to the artists to speak, or to Sudarmadji and Sanento who earlier spoke, I would like to hear the opinions from the contemporaries—the artist-peers of those exhibiting—who might have a different opinion. I invite you to share.

Name Unknown 2: Actually, I've wanted to talk because us youth are quite uneasy with the developments occurring in Indonesian art. The first time I saw the preparation of this exhibition, actually, I was quite surprised because I felt that there was going to be something new that they would reveal. But after chatting with a few people—to Mulyoto, Hardi and others—there is one conclusion: that their voice is the unified voice of a group. I did not find what, for example, Atik, Nanik, there were individual voices that want him to say in an echo the art we are calling New Indonesian Art. Talking about something new, I still remember a night, three days ago when we enlivened the Ancol Bazaar. Late at night, we talked with some friends ,and also there was Mas Handoko, Totok and others. There is a conclusion that in this exhibition—maybe related to the earlier response of Pak Feransi, there were three points earlier. How might the problems of pop art as mentioned by Andy Warhol, that he made something that was produced because it turns out they saw that the process of buyers for works of art is already quite fast. So he calculated that for a buyer to appreciate a work—that can also be considered time that is part of the creation process. So it was indeed developments in Europe or in the United States that show that the matter of time is crucial so that the works are made in accordance with the will of society. So for example, how to easily reproduce, and also that the works are matched with the rooms of particular buildings of flats. But here I see there is something strange. If we see that they want to express something new in Indonesia—I guess that's not our intention from young artists, launching something new. If we learn that we now

live in a cutting-edge era, where at the same time we can see the works of Picasso, or a month ago at Taman Ismail Marzuki we can see an American exhibition, a French exhibition in actual physical form. We see that in fact the young artists in Indonesia do not need to participate in the carnivals of the art world by just following unthinkingly from behind. For Kandinsky said that for an artist who is a master, it is like being located at the tip of a pyramid that maybe only—for example, if Hardi is actually at the tip of the pyramid, probably knows just the point below the pyramid itself, 2-3 people who can understand. Maybe I am still too stupid to not understand what their works are here. If we are moving as one field of art, I do not want us to simply mimic the developments from around the world, that we all have to acknowledge we have actually been able to see before. So for example, how Picasso is dead now and then everyone runs to the god Salvador Dali, or next to new surrealists. And I want to actually have a longer dialogue on these 11 artists. How, for example, Hardi said that he is a new realist, when actually Realism was already abandoned a few decades ago, in 1928-1930; now they've already given expression to an exaggerated realism, so it's not new anymore, because the new may already be outdated, and they are exaggerating. Also for example, earlier the use of materials was already touched upon—the new possibility, in the physical sense, is their courage to reveal the use of new materials such as glass, plastic, or—like Jimi said, that he might use the abilities of other people who are available to us. It is a sign that it is a new thing. I hope there will be an answer from each of these 11 people—their individual views on the art world. So I guess we are outdated if we say that now it is the "new Indonesia" or "Indonesian art" of different kinds, because now there is a universal time, so if we are still talking about which Indonesian art or what is new, it is actually already not a problem anymore But I want to address something, like Pak Gatot said earlier, the substance in the meaning of the creation alone is not only a social engagement, as Hardi said, for example. I would be more inclined if Hardi worked now at Tempo to be an expert, that is what I think would be more successful. Or likewise, Harsono for example, he might be more successful if he became a designer because it is fitting—it is a well-organized space. But the reverberation they will want, as a new generation, as one that they earlier called "young artists", is a scope that is still far away. So Mas Sanento correctly said earlier that we are not fortune-tellers, whether they will be able to sustain and keep working. But myself as a colleague of young artists, I'm concerned, because, on one hand, they dare with youthful courage to revealing something new, but on the other hand, they did not think enough—is this just an explosion or, as was said earlier, shocks that only spark an impulse, like that? If they just want to give you a new way, and others were told that this is a new one, when in fact that is already an old development. So a few questions, maybe I am a little too much "back and forth", maybe later after there is an answer, I could be more detailed. Thank you.

Moderator: Earlier Nashar said that the exhibition, if we look at the works, is not too alien if we often see the reproductions and projections of art developing in Western Europe or America. And Sulebar seems to be more assertive with his allegations by parroting Kandinsky who say that these painters or the works of the artists who are exhibiting here are participating in a world art carnival. I think Hardi, Jimi, and Atik are no longer patient with waiting to give their reactions. I invite you first Atik, then Jimi and Hardi.

Atik: Only one answer, we all have to participate in the world carnival. That's it, the others can probably explain more clearly.

Jimi: I would like to answer a few things—maybe the “lively” lead to questions. This means some things, talking about the problem of Indonesianness, and also broadly talking about the fate of Indonesian art and so on. I think the principal thing is that we had to leave behind an illness in our art, that is, a kind of prophet. Art is alway measured with something cultural, then “good for this”, “good for that”, then “useful for this”, then “responsible for culture” and so on. If I am that prophet, and receive a vision, as long as we are reasonably introspective—so often we come to the conclusion that we are ordinary people and not some kind of prophet. So what we do is based on a belief that we have, that it is then useful, or not, like what was raised by Pak Gatot, that we might be marginalized people, and even then the risk is when to go crazy—that is speculation. So I think that in our works, we expressed an opinion that is nonetheless still speculative, and I think we all agree with waiting for developments. I think it's a good thing. And new issues, meaning those that were raised earlier and asked by Pak Nashar, about the difference between painting and sculpture. I think the conversation between us, eleven individuals—one thing that is interesting to us is the merging of the split between a number of expressions that have separated artists into factions—that is one facet. If this is new, or not in the art world, or not in our art world, or what not, it does not need us to value it. It is certain that this view already exists, whether in America, or in Europe, or in something else, but we see an urgency. This means that in our art, we feel there are a number of dogmas or bonds that have been, in our opinion—or maybe a kind of arrogance, as was proposed by Pak Gatot, binding us, or making us afraid to work. If we want to work, or say we want to present our views through work, it is questioned whether we are talented, and then if we simply had a vision. And to speak one must study for ten years, and then finally may speak. For example, in my current condition, I want to talk, and to learn to speak will take me 15 years, and by then what I want to say now will be dead. I think that, and in that regard I also want to ask about what was said by Pak Gatot, about impulse. Yes, we do not need to debate the term, like what Pak Feransi said, but in our work it means that most do not require—or did not problematise—an artistic issue, or almost all of us avoid this problem. Well this may be a kind of challenge, like what was said by Pak Gatot. Challenging in the sense of art of course; I am not challenging anyone to fight, or this challenge is not shown to whomever, that if that impulse shows something or has a desire, we just limit one desire, whether under the navel, or two points below the groin—it doesn’t matter. That if we want to say something, how we treat it is determined by the contents of that desire to speak. For example, if I want to talk like this now, yes, of course, I should have structure to what I’m saying—then I have structure or an arrangement of logic and such. But there was a time when there was a kind of feeling that I thought I did not need to go with one structure—even though this does not become a mainstay of our works, but, for example, such feelings of hate or dislike—that is what I think does not need to be spoken by a structure or any sort of sophisticated way. But, yes, maybe at a time by punching, or here in this room and then break a window—I think, anyway, it already shows an attitude or quality. I think that—although we are not going to do it—and that's what we say we are doing through some form of artwork. And I think it's irony, an artistic one that always inspires feelings that please, that are beautiful, and then seduce and such. Yes, if for example I do

not like a person, yes of course I will not flirt, but yes maybe I will insult—maybe like that. Just so, I think.

Moderator: Hardi.

Hardi: I am very interested, and thanks for the opinions of our senior painters and also from among the young people who are the same age as us, Sulebar Sukarman earlier. I, personally, cannot represent all of my friends from the group, but there may also be some common ground amongst those of us exhibiting here. To address the allegations that we have similarities with the West, with this that has already been seen in reproductions, I think it is not just happening to us, but the painters of our past have been dragged through it since Raden Saleh—completely mired in Delacroix, for example. Or further back, Affandi, winding around lines in the style of Van Gogh—it was not a new thing then. And then the works of Nashar, like those of Wassily Kandinsky, or Srihadi like Mark Rothko, etc. This also happened in sculpture, for example, Rita Widagdo like _____ (naming a foreign artist), Gregorius Sidharta and such. Why up until now are we questioning again, or prosecuting, or giving the opinion that this is a matter that has long been done by _____ (naming foreign artists), the Dadaists, Pop Art and so forth. It was clear, I—as an exhibiting painter—admit. However I feel more proud of being labeled, so as opposed to being labeled "too old-fashioned"—I am still working on impressionism, then I paint something that can be categorised as expressionist like so many works from colleagues, Jakarta painters. We are not abolishing milestones that have been struck in Indonesia for painting, for example, since Raden Saleh entered a period of Romanticism, or Affandi Expressionism, then you Zaini, then you Nashar and so forth, they have contributed to painting in Indonesia. Then what will we rely on with this, whether we will revel in Nashar-izing ourselves and then claim ourselves to be painters, when Pak Nashar clearly commenced the milestone here. Or are we still patting our backs as painters because our paintings resemble Affandi's, or we are still proud to paint because our paintings are similar to Sadali's—clearly not. For me, I pursue self-esteem and identity. Maybe I, as someone from Yogyakarta, will not dare to come here to Jakarta, and will be shy with Pak Zaini, with Pak Nashar and all of my paintings still resemble theirs. I am more pleased if my paintings are eccentric, superficial, sort of like Pop Art, the Dadaists, this group or that group, but obviously these works, for people whose eyes are not shut, are clearly new works for Indonesia and we have explained that this is New Indonesian Art. If it's about clear influences, we admit that, and as Sulebar said earlier, our cultures are not "Indonesian culture", or the culture of this or that, but it has become a universal culture. Our world has been unified, meaning Muhammad Ali competes in Singapore and we can see it simultaneously here on the television. So if young artists still call themselves painters painting in an old-fashioned style—champions of the old-fashioned—that I think is more tragic. How would he regard eras; how would he dare to proclaim that he is a painter—I think that is fatal. However we very much appreciate the earlier comments, as it they are like a whip, forcing introspection, challenging us to progress further. And one more message: whether the condoms that were installed are an example of America, clearly condoms has been approved in Indonesia. Whether it appears that people kissing are only Americans, or if Muniardhi installs a door, this door belongs to America? Siti Adiyati incorporating elements of glass in this room is also American? Or Jimi laying face down bed and then a person is injected in the eye—is it Indonesian or American? I think that for people who still use common sense, it would be enough to admit that those of us present are clearly inno-

vators. For this moment in painting that has been stalled, who else, if not our young people, will innovate? That is all.

Moderator: If I can conclude, it may or may not be concluded like this: that statement from Jimi was very interesting and I guess right on the target of problematics. If painters—according to the senior ones—are still engaged in a mindset that is still associated with high values—noble and so on—then we see that the foundations of these works are a kind of anti-culture character. Earlier, Jimi had described anti-structure and a tendency to give shape to the most aggressive impulses of man. So the works that we see here are almost a kind of sublimation of those earlier impulses. What I mean by sublimation is this: if one were inclined to kill, but the public suppresses him from killing, yeah, then he will find a job as a butcher. So the tendency of aggression was sublimated through a job that can be accepted by society. I pointed out a question, and maybe we can talk about this, because I think it is a problem that was tossed out and attached to the works that we see in this room. Jimi, if I could formulate it so? That there is a kind of anti-culture, anti-structure, and a kind of sublimation of impulses—perhaps the most aggressive impulses in man. Is there? Can this be concluded? Perhaps others, including Sudarmadji and Sanento, can respond to this.

Sanento: If I had to consider that last one, I'm afraid the problem is far too broad. Because if it is said that here are anti-culture impulses, we can discuss what we think of as culture, or further afield, we can question whether the culture that developed until now, and which always takes place with pressure, with the suppression of human instinct, against human potential—is this what we think of as a culture? Or we can look further to a perhaps-too-utopian view of human culture? Is it possible we could think, or perhaps daydream, about a new culture in which people are more free? The problem then becomes this: we bring ourselves to cultural criticism that I think is popular in the world today, and I am afraid of being too broad in discussing this problem. But this is perhaps something that is interesting for us to consider in order to discuss the arts now. Yes—for my suggestion—perhaps other exhibitions with discussion events addressing modern art are not limited to Indonesia, in relation to human culture as seen from various aspects. Perhaps that would be more interesting than us discussing this in this smaller event. That's probably the one thing I can say.

Moderator: Any others?

Sudarmadji: Among the many here, I am more inclined to think that, indeed, some of this work demonstrates a manifestation—or a purification, or term used by Feransi—this is indeed a form of sublimation of very fundamental instincts or impulses that perhaps deal closely with human nature, but because of social ethical codes, codes of conduct, etc.—especially those concerning law, concerning human rights, KOMNAS and so on. So that one or more people, indeed, were forced to suppress or vent in other ways is still allowed. Wrong or not, this is what I gathered. That if Jimi produced a work filled with padlocks that are locked, perhaps it is also a manifestation from experiences of fear—maybe of the professor, maybe a fear of customers, fear of others—so that he was forced to lock up tightly what he really wants to talk about. But really in the field of art, this thing is very common all over. Some can indeed let it out more clearly; the others are forced to use symbolic language. So there are things that we can indeed capture and show, like the work of Nanik Mirna, for example, that, because it is within the scope of the arts, we perceive it as a manifestation of artistic sublimation. But if it came to an anti-culture conclusion, or something else—I think this is too much and perhaps the creators themselves did not go that far. Therefore this manifestation of workmanship is already culture. Thank you.

Moderator: I see Nurhadi Tuti busy talking and I know that Tuti has an opinion that is, I think, quite harsh. I invite Tuti to speak. The discussion is open to poets, to psychologists, to anyone. Please, if your voice is loud enough, you can speak from there.

Tuti Nurhadi: I was not given the opportunity to think before talking, but I guess that's okay, because I think the artists also did not think before painting any of this. Actually, coming here and looking at it is enough to then give an impression, but this mess also created a catalog. And in the catalogs there are some notes, there are writings, which I think must be justified because it was already black and white. So, we can respond in a few different ways, we can respond, for example, we take a stroll here and then come to a conclusion "ah, this is childish naughtiness, what we see here". I speak so because Feransi said I was quite harsh so I was forced to adjust to Feransi’s forecast. Childish naughtiness might be better called juvenile delinquency, but if we ask why children, it is because children do not yet have identity. Well, it's been mentioned that there is a crisis of identity, so no need to mention it again, as it is already too familiar. That is already stale, essentially once I mention it, I now touch on this matter of identity. But if we otherwise respond—meaning based on the writings in the catalog—I see there is a tendency to direct yourself toward objects—to concrete matters. There are some who respond that this attitude is a realistic attitude; it is laudable, realism. But it can be reviewed also as another possibility, if we are interested in things that are concrete, it is a symptom of what exactly? What is it, to be concrete? Man—is he an object as well? No. If you follow the course of human philosophy, human beings are not objects, but rather humans are subjects, meaning that he has self-consciousness and so on. So he was not an object, but suddenly he was enthralled and fascinated by objects—well this is as if he is jealous of the density of these objects. Is it also said that he, himself, does not have the density of this object, and therefore he is jealous of objects, fascinated by objects, enchanted by objects and eventually defeated be and lost to objects? I just gave some ideas for thinking, if you have time to think among the paint. I think that is enough for now, and if other ideas arise, I will share them.

Moderator: But briefly, before returning to place, at the time of the opening Tuti expressed an impression to me: that we hear the music here, and we see these objects then Frans Haryadi asks "hows the music?", "Oh, I'm happy", then “how are these objects?”, "Whoa, how, yeah?". [Laughing] It could be a little elaborated…

Tuti Nurhadi: So, Feransi wants to provoke more of a reaction in me. Put it this way: rather than be provoked by Feransi, I provoke Feransi.

Moderator: I was assigned to be a moderator here, so …

Tuti Nurhadi: What I mean is this, if it is said that everything is a release of instincts or sublimation, what is sublimated? Sublimation was a psychological or psychoanalytical concept of Freud’s, and if we talk about sublimation, logically we ask what is sublimated. There is a force that is transformed into another energy, channeled into something that can be accepted. But that which is distributed, which is sublimated, according to Freud, is libido. What still needs to be explained is what is libido. So sublimation is the distribution of the sex impulse in an acceptable form, and I think that is the issue of young people, too. Actually, there is not much use of me talking because I only raise questions and the answers rest with you. I was probably too negative, but when I tried to look for the positive, it was rather difficult. So basically you are brave looking for the new—the original, or thought to be new. What I would like to argue: whether in the search for a naughty child, did he

want his ear pinched or not? If you do not want to be with others, be on your own, as is usually more difficult. So it's up to you about what kind of resistance you seek. That is all.

Moderator: I think I was not wrong in inviting Tuti Nurhadi to speak. I guess we are tossing around in this forum quite a lot of problems, but they are interrelated. I think there are still reactions to what was raised by Jimi and Tuti earlier. I think there are kinda two poles which may be called contrary. How do I proceed with the forum now, Imanuel? Let's go, Imanuel, please. Perhaps from the young painters, or young filmmakers. How about it, Mus?

Mustika: Perhaps I just wanted to ask—what was said earlier by Tuti, about juvenile delinquency. But I see that there is maturity as well, meaning that not only is there a general teenage delinquency, but there is still a hidden maturity. I want to ask about the maturity that is still, itself, hidden. I see here works that solicit anxiety, but there are also works that draw out my delight to see and accept these works. I feel there are some disturbing or negative statements, or feelings of fear, because of ugliness, and so on and so forth. Sudarmadji made the example earlier about the work of Jimi, which was interpreted as possibly about fear, because of lack of freedom and so on. I may classify the negative things, but I want to question whether, in addition to the negative things in life, there are certainly positive things. This is what I consider to be the maturity hidden in the exhibit earlier. Now I want to get an answer that could come from any painter who is exhibiting with these works. And how about the cultivation of—or at least, we can see there are negative things that we must degrade or challenge; there are positive things that we are also at ease when we see them—happy we saw it—he meets us sympathetically, where there is a balance, and that balance is one—at least it can be viewed as a whole, clearly. I guess that is my question. Thank You.

Moderator: Maybe we can hear from other painters who have not yet spoken and want to express their opinions and respond to Mustika. And respond to what was raised earlier by Nurhadi Tuti. Bonyong?

Bonyong: It has already been mentioned by Ibu Tuti, about juvenile delinquency, and Atik has asked about our parents' delinquency. What I mean here, in mentioning dogmas in painting or art, that are more suggestive, that art has dogmas that have been obvious, this is a response that might be a bit reckless, if freed from that dogma, then there will be a prejudice that will not be accepting, I feel. Suppose I judge our seniors from Yogyakarta, and Bandung or Jakarta, that I was a little disappointed, responding to the development of art—they are producing works that have a circularity that does not continue anymore. So I guess this anxiety—alongside our expression—clearly conflicting, that our seniors have experienced a run that has become a vicious cycle.